

DECOMPRESS THE CHEST: NEEDLE DECOMPRESSION

For use of this form see TC 8-800; the proponent agency is TRADOC.

TABLES: I

REFERENCES: STP 8-68W13-SM-TG, Task: 081-833-3007, Perform A Needle Chest Decompression; Prehospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS), Revised Military Edition.

1. Soldier (*Last Name, First Name, MI*)

2. Date (YYYYMMDD)

CONDITIONS: Given a casualty or a Soldier acting as a casualty with severe thoracic trauma in a simulated combat environment. You are not in a CBRN environment.
The second leading cause of preventable death on the battlefield is a tension pneumothorax. If not identified in a casualty with a penetrating wound to the chest, it can be fatal. It is imperative that you, as a Soldier Medic, know how to effectively manage penetrating chest injuries and to recognize and treat a tension pneumothorax.

STANDARDS: Perform all measures IAW the standards of evaluation outlined in C168W144/1 Tactical Combat Casualty Care. You must score at least 70% (*7 of 10 steps*) and not miss any critical (*) elements on the skill sheet.

SAFETY:

- o Risk Assessment: Low. All bodily fluids should be considered potentially infectious; always observe body substance isolation (BSI).
- o Precautions: Wear gloves and eye protection as a minimal standard of protection.
- o Environmental: None.

NOTE: Soldier Medics must be observed. (*Evaluator to Soldier Medic ratio is 1:6*).

TEST SCENARIO:

During a night patrol, your platoon receives intense small arms fire. As your platoon returns fire and takes up defensive positions, the second squad leader calls for your attention regarding a fallen Soldier. Once the area is secured, you assess the casualty. The casualty presents with signs and symptoms of a tension pneumothorax. You determine the casualty requires a needle chest decompression; you have been provided the necessary medical equipment.

3. Evaluator's Comments and After-Test Recommendations:

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DECOMPRESS THE CHEST: NEEDLE DECOMPRESSION GRADING SHEET

TASK	COMPLETED					
	1ST		2ND		3RD	
	P	F	P	F	P	F
4.						
a. * Took/verbalized body substance isolation (BSI) precautions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. * Assessed the casualty to ensure the progressive respiratory distress was due to a penetrating chest wound.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. * Identified the second ICS on the anterior chest wall at the MCL on the same side as the injury; approximately two finger widths below the clavicle.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Cleansed the site with an antimicrobial solution.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Inserted the needle into the chest. EVALUATOR: Administratively gain control of the needle and syringe unit and place it in a sharps container.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. * Stabilized the catheter hub to the chest wall with adhesive tape.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Placed the casualty in a sitting position or on their injured side (<i>recovery position</i>) during transport.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Removed their gloves and disposed of them appropriately.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Documented the procedure on the appropriate medical form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. * Did not cause further injury to the casualty.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* CRITICAL ELEMENTS						

DECOMPRESS THE CHEST: NEEDLE DECOMPRESSION
GRADING SHEET (cont'd)

5. Demonstrated Proficiency

Yes

☐

No

☐

6. Start Time

7. Stop Time

8. Initial Evaluator

9. Start Time

10. Stop Time

11. Retest Evaluator

12. Start Time

13. Stop Time

14. Final Evaluator

15. Remarks

DECOMPRESS THE CHEST: NEEDLE DECOMPRESSION EVALUATOR GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS

Inform the Soldier Medic of the CONDITIONS and STANDARDS as stated on this form.

Provide an optional scenario, if appropriate. This scenario should reinforce the unique or particular needs of the unit.

Allow sufficient time for the Soldier Medic to extract information from the scenario.

Provide each evaluator with the grading sheet.

Ensure the Soldier Medic has all required materials.

Explain how the exercise is graded.

Resource Requirements:

Evaluator: Grading sheet and applicable scenario.

Soldier Medic: Applicable scenario, medical aid bag stocked with a basic load.

Additional Scoring Guidelines:

Inserted the needle into the chest.

- Removed the plastic cap from the 2.5-3 inch 14 gauge needle.
- Inserted the needle into the skin over the superior border of the third rib, MCL, and directed the needle into the ICS at a 90 degree angle.
- As the needle entered the pleural space, a "pop" was felt, followed by a possible hiss of air.
- Removed the needle leaving the catheter in place.